WHAT I CLAIM IS:

1. A method for automatically managing an electronic mail server application on a host computer, said method comprising the steps of:

    (a)   checking an electronic mail message against a predetermined criteria; and

    (b)   compacting the electronic mail message if the predetermined criteria is satisfied.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of checking is performed when the electronic mail message is received by the electronic mail server application.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of checking is performed periodically on the host computer.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic mail message is an inbound mail message addressed to a user served by the electronic mail server application.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic mail message is an outbound mail message sent from a user served by the electronic mail server application.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises a total message size.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises an attachment size.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises an attachment type.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises an expected compression ratio.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of compacting comprises the step of compressing the electronic mail message.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic mail message comprises a message body and an attachment, and wherein the step of compacting comprises the steps of:

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(i)   detaching the attachment from the electronic mail message;

(ii)   saving the attachment to a location on a second computer;

(iii)   inserting an index in the electronic mail message in place of the

attachment.

12.   The method of claim 11, wherein the second computer is the host computer.

13.   The method of claim 11, wherein the second computer is a local computer.

14.   The method of claim 11, wherein the index is a uniform resource locator associated with

the location of the attachment on the second computer.

15.   The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of compressing the attachment.

16.   A method for reducing a size of an electronic mail message comprising an attachment,

wherein said electronic mail message and said attachment are retrievable using an electronic mail

application, said method comprising the steps of:

(a)   exporting the attachment to a location on a computer;

(b)   deleting the attachment from the electronic mail message; and

(c)   inserting an index in the electronic mail message, wherein said index indicates the

location of the attachment on the computer.

17.   The method of claim 16, wherein the index comprises a universal resource locator

associated with the location of the attachment on the computer.

18.   The method of claim 16, wherein the electronic mail application is run on the computer.

19.   The method of claim 16, wherein the electronic mail application is run on a second

computer.

20.   The method of claim 19, wherein the second computer is accessible via the world-wide

web.

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21. A method for managing a user's electronic mailbox on a computer, said method comprising the steps of:

    (a)   checking an electronic mail message against a predetermined criteria; and

    (b)   compressing the electronic mail message if the predetermined criteria is satisfied.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the step of checking is performed when the electronic mail message is received by the electronic mailbox.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the step of checking is performed upon request by the user.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein the electronic mail message is an inbound mail message addressed to the user.

25. The method of claim 21, wherein the electronic mail message is an outbound mail message sent from the user.

26. The method of claim 21, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises a total message size.

27. The method of claim 21, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises an attachment size.

28. The method of claim 21, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises an attachment type.

29. The method of claim 21, wherein the predetermined criteria comprises an expected compression ratio.

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